

## **AEF and Three AUSD Students Win Community Service Awards**

This past Thursday night, Mayor Marilyn Ezzy Ashcraft and the City of Alameda's Social Service Human Relations Board honored this year's recipients at the Seventh Annual Community Service Awards Ceremony. This year the awards honor individuals, businesses, and organizations that made noteworthy contributions to our community, particularly in advancing racial justice or responding to the COVID-19 crisis.

We are delighted to announce that our partner, Alameda Education Foundation, won the Non-Profit of the Year award and three AUSD students won Youth Service awards.

### **Responding to the Pandemic**

AEF was awarded for responding to the unique challenges of the pandemic by:

- Providing 2200 school supply kits and backpacks to needy children through their "Equipped for Success Reimagined" campaign
- Distributing about 2000 headsets to students who may have background noise in their houses that makes it hard for them to participate in their Zoom classrooms
- Purchasing 800 craft kits to keep students engaged during the pandemic
- Funding AUSD's contract with Care Solace, a service that links students and families with mental health supports

AEF supported AUSD teachers directly by purchasing "Culturally Responsive Teaching and the Brain" (Zoretta Hammond's groundbreaking book on the way that trusting relationships between students and teachers help students access rigorous learning experiences). The non-profit also provided funding for mini grants to support the unique needs of teachers this year. The grants, which were funded by a \$50,000 donation from Bank of Marin, have funded about 40 teachers' projects, including:

- Oil and water color paints for art students at Encinal High School
- Drum making kits for elementary students
- Special apps and other tools for deaf and hard of hearing students
- Sets of books about inclusiveness for school libraries
- Yoga instruction for Wood Middle School students
- Art supplies and curricula focusing on non-Eurocentric art

- Music curricula to be shared with all elementary school

Since the pandemic began, AEF has also converted its summer camps to online programs that served about 400 students. This fall, the non-profit offered 24 enrichment programs that served about 250 students. And AEF is now collaborating with Rhythmix Cultural Works to provide a visual arts program including an artist profile and student art activity to complement each multi-cultural assembly performance for the 2020-21 school year. (We'll have more information about this in a later newsletter!)

### **Youth Service Awards**

The City also awarded three AUSD students with Youth Service Awards. The three honorees are:

**Henry Mills**, a sophomore at Alameda High School, who is currently a student Board of Education member. Over the last several years, Henry has worked on updated dress code and sexual harassment policies for AUSD, as well as an updated current life curriculum. Henry also created AUSD's first ever Student Advisory Board, is the Alameda High School representative to the School Site Council and PTSA, and has volunteered at the Alameda Food Bank, the Alameda Animal Shelter, Trinity Lutheran Church, nursing homes, and community events for youth. He is a cabinet member to Junior State of America and the Director of Communications for the California Student Board Member Association. As an intern at Alameda Family Services' School Based Health Center, Henry has facilitated workshops, classroom presentations, and lunchtime events to help students connect with free and confidential resources regarding mental health, sexual wellness, and self-care

**Noa Joseph**, a 3rd grader at Otis Elementary School, who this past summer created the "Art Gallery for Good" to raise money for the Alameda County Community Food Bank. The project originally started as a local kids' artwork display, but it soon went viral and adult artists donated their work to the cause. Noa produced the materials to publicize the project, created numerous art pieces to sell, set up a Go Fund Me campaign, and hosted an event at Krusi Park. Between the Go Fund Me campaign and the Art Gallery for Good donations, Noa raised over \$750 for the Alameda County Community Food Bank!

**Serena McIntosh**, a senior at Alameda High School, whose script for a public service advertisement on preventing underage drinking won first place in a state competition. The prize included working with a Hollywood film crew to produce the PSA. Serena chose a non-binary friend as the lead, thereby giving visibility to the LGBTQIA community. Serena is the president of the AHS Film Club, a Link Crew leader (a program for supporting freshman students in their transition into high school, and a co-captain of the cheerleading squad.

"In these difficult times, I truly find hope in seeing how our young people recognize other peoples' needs and find ways to meet those needs," Superintendent Scuderi says. "We have a generation of students who are stepping forward, without courage and compassion, to help others in their communities. I am so proud of these students and what they have achieved."